

CPYRGHT

ing the aluminum producers for their recent price-raising activity.

I submit that the Administration has committed two serious sins in this affair. First, the President is attempting to coerce the aluminum producers into holding the present price line. This is both wrong and unlawful. The President has no authority to undertake any such action. Mr. Ackley maintains that the justification for this move is that the price increases are inflationary and that they weaken the position of the aluminum companies in the world market. Certainly any increase in price is either inflationary or the result of inflation; but our Federal Government itself is one of the most inflationary forces in the country with its planned deficit spending. And I would rather suspect that the aluminum producers are quite capable of looking after the health of their own organizations without any fatherly assistance. Even if they were not, and even if their action could be construed to be severely inflationary, the Administration still has not the right, under present law, to engage in any form of "price-stabilizing" coercion.

The other sin committed by the Administration is the simple one of deliberately misleading the American people. Again and again Mr. Moyers made it clear that the top-level meeting was in no way connected with the recent price rises; and then, suddenly, it is obvious that it was. Mr. Moyers, being a very articulate man, could no doubt defend with some degree of

justification every word that he uttered on the subject. I only maintain that there was a definite attempt to create a false impression. With the CIA, we have come to expect outright lies, and we believe not a single official proclamation made by that agency. It is extremely regrettable to find the White House resorting to similar tactics.

The whole aluminum affair has left the Administration covered with something other than glory.

John L. Wickham.

Baltimore.

#### The Aluminum Affair

Sir: I am fascinated by the White House vs. aluminum struggle that is currently being waged.

First, we read that President Johnson is "angered" by news of aluminum price increases, and that he has coincidentally ordered a meeting of top-level officials to discuss "possible action." Then, for the next several days, we are assured by Bill Moyers, the press secretary, that there is no connection between the price increases and the Government meeting. And finally it turns out that as a result of the meeting 200,000 tons of aluminum stockpiled by the Government will be disposed of during the coming year, to the accompaniment of W. Gardner Ackley, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, roundly condemn-

FOIAb3b